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SECURITY INFORMATION

50X1-HUM

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION 50X1-HUM

1. VEB Maxhuette, Unterwellenborn

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- a. Fritz Selbmann, Minister of Heavy Industry, (1) DDR, visited this plant  and was told about the present condition of the blast furnaces there. Selbmann ruled that production must be increased at all costs to make good the losses incurred by the failures at both Fuerstenberg and Calbe in spite of the poor and dangerous condition of these furnaces. He added that the furnaces will have to remain in operation until they actually break down.
- b. The output of the plant's three blast furnaces has consequently been raised to 1,300 metric tons per day but this has only been made possible by feeding the furnaces with 70% core scrap (Kernschrott). Although both costly and wasteful, the use of such a high percentage of scrap has proved to be the only possible solution to enable the plant to meet the Minister's demands.
- c. The arrival of a new broad strip mill at this plant has been confirmed. The frames were supplied by SAG Krupp Gruson, (2) Magdeburg, and the motors by a firm named  (3). The rollers are to be supplied by Skoda, Czechoslovakia, and are due in the near future. Work on the erection of this new strip mill train (1050 mm) is well under way.
- d. The slab rolling mill train at this steel works broke down about 15 December 1951 when one of the frames collapsed. Every effort is being made to effect a speedy repair or replacement. So far this has proved to be an extremely difficult task since only SAG Krupp Gruson (2) or VEB Abus Schwermaschinenbau Wildau are capable of assisting. This breakdown has resulted in the standstill of some other rolling mill trains at Maxhuette which depend on this slab train for their semi-finished items.

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- e. The one low shaft furnace at this plant, which is now on normal production, has reached a daily output of 70 metric tons.

2. Eisenhuettenkombinat West Calbe/Saale VEB, VVB EFW

- a. The No. 1 low shaft furnace at this plant, which remains the only one finished so far, is at present fed with 50% core scrap and fuelled with additional oil burners suspended inside the furnace. The oil consumed by these burners alone costs four times as much as the resulting amount of crude iron produced. Failures of the cowpers have necessitated the use of these burners until the first of the new air preheaters, of which 15 have just been ordered, becomes available. The air preheaters will have a capacity of 40,000 cubic meters and preheat the air on entry into the furnace up to 800° C.
- b. Low shaft furnace No. 2 was due to be completed by about 24 December 1951; 20 of these furnaces are to be built at this new steel works.

3. Eisenhuetten-Kombinat Ost, (EKO) Fuerstenberg VEB, VVB EFW

- a. The No. 1 blast furnace continues to have waste gas difficulties, although it has resumed production again.

- b. Blast furnace No. 2 was due to be completed by 20 December 1951.

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4. Steel plate supplies

[redacted] all rolling mills had been instructed by the DDR Government to execute only those orders for supplies required to fulfil reparations orders for the first quarter of 1952. [redacted]

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5. Unexploited steel capacity in the DDR

During a conversation with an employee of the Ministry for Smelting and Ore Mining [redacted] Selbmann said that imports of crude steel from Russia were essential because the DDR steel production capacity was not being fully exploited. He explained that according to calculations made by Walzwerk fuer Buntmetall, Hettstedt (SAG Marten), on the basis of hearth surface performance (Herdflaechenleistung), the DDR could produce an extra 350,000 tons of crude steel per annum. (4) He added that he was asking for daily crude steel returns from VEB's in order to find out the reason for the insufficient exploitation of production capacity.

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- (1) [redacted] Comment: The structure of the Ministry of Heavy Industry was changed on 5 November 1951 and the Ministry for Smelting and Ore Mining established with Fritz Selbmann as its Minister.

- (2) [redacted] Comment: Renamed the Ernst Thaelmann.

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- (4) [redacted] Comment: [redacted] the Minister's remarks referred only to the production of steel in the SM and not the Thomas process. If so, the plants involved would be Hennigsdorf with 5 SM furnaces of 40 tons capacity each, Riesa with 6 furnaces of about 100 tons capacity each, Groeditz with 5 furnaces of 40 or 60 tons capacity each and Brandenburg with 8 furnaces of about 120 tons capacity each; Maxhuetten is producing Thomas steel.

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